

~~Ballot Argument In Opposition to Proposition 73~~

PARENTS RIGHTFULLY WANT TO BE INVOLVED IN THEIR TEENAGERS' LIVES and all parents want what is best for their children. BUT GOOD FAMILY COMMUNICATION CAN'T BE IMPOSED BY GOVERNMENT.

Parents care most about keeping their children safe. That means always safe, even if they feel they can't come to us and tell us everything.

Family communication must begin long before a teen faces an unplanned pregnancy. **The best way to protect our daughters is to begin talking about responsible, appropriate sexual behavior from the time they are young and fostering an atmosphere that assures them they can come to us.**

Even teenagers who have good relationships with their parents might be afraid to talk to them about something as sensitive as pregnancy.

And sadly, some teens live in troubled homes. The family might be having serious problems, or parents might be abusive, or a relative may even have caused the pregnancy.

THIS LAW PUTS THOSE VULNERABLE TEENAGERS – THOSE WHO MOST NEED PROTECTION – IN HARM'S WAY, OR FORCES THEM TO GO TO COURT. Think about it: the girl is already terrified, she's pregnant, her family is abusive or worse. She's not going to be marching up to a judge in a crowded courtroom. **She doesn't need a judge, she needs a counselor.**

Mandatory notification laws make scared, pregnant teens who can't go to their parents do scary things, instead of going to the doctor to get the medical help they need. In other states, when parental notification laws make teenagers choose between talking with parents or having illegal or unsafe abortions, some teens choose the illegal abortion - even though it is dangerous. Sometimes teenagers are just teenagers.

And if, in desperation, teenagers turn to illegal, self-induced or back-alley abortions many will suffer serious injuries and some will die.

The CALIFORNIA NURSES ASSOCIATION, CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS AND THE CALIFORNIA MEDICAL ASSOCIATION ALL

**SUBJECT TO COURT  
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OPPOSE Proposition 73. Mandatory notification laws may sound good, but, in the real world, they just put teenagers in real danger.

THE REAL ANSWER TO TEEN PREGNANCY IS PREVENTION, AND STRONG, CARING FAMILIES -NOT NEW LAWS THAT ENDANGER OUR DAUGHTERS.

California's teen pregnancy rate dropped significantly over the last decade without constitutional amendments or forced notification laws. That's because doctors, nurses, parents, teachers and counselors are teaching teenagers about responsibility, abstinence and birth control. These programs will help keep our daughters safe and out of trouble.

**Talking to our daughters when they are young and fostering a place where they can freely communicate is the best solution.**

**BUT IF--FOR WHATEVER REASON--OUR DAUGHTERS CAN'T OR THEY WON'T COME TO US, WE MUST MAKE SURE THEY GET SAFE, PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL ATTENTION AND QUALITY COUNSELING FROM CARING DOCTORS AND NURSES.**

As parents, we want to know when our daughters face a decision like this so we can be helpful and supportive. But also, as parents, our daughters' safety is more important than our desire to be informed.

Please join us in voting NO on Proposition 73.

Signers:

- 1. Robert L. Black, M.D., FAAP, Officer of the Board, American Academy of Pediatrics, California District
- 2. Ruth E. Haskins, M.D., Chair Committee on Legislation, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, District IX California
- 3. Deborah Burger, RN, President, California Nurses Association

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